Water and Human Rights: Exploring the Roles and Responsibilities of Business
Access to Water

- Sufficient
- Safe
- Acceptable
- Accessible
- Affordable

“The human right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses.” - GC 15.
Not affirmed explicitly, but...

- CRC
- CEDAW
- ILO 161 (Disability)
- General Comment 15 (ESCR 11 - Standard of Living, and ESCR 12 - Health)
- Independent Expert in 2008
Which rights?

- Life
- Health (Art 12 ESCR) - 2000 safe drinking water and sufficient sanitation
- Food
- Adequate Standard of Living - (Art 11 ESCR)
- Non-Discrimination/Equality
- Torture
- Participation
- Seek, receive, impart information
- Cultural rights
- Indigenous communities
Recent cases

- Cochabamba
- Soweto
- Ilisu, Narmada, Three Gorges, Pergau, Merowe
- Plachimada
- Fiji
- Niger Delta
- Bhopal
Reality

- Impact on women
- Impact on poor (costs)
- Sanitation
Ruggie Framework

- Duty to Protect
- Responsibility to Respect
- Effective Access to Remedies
Industrial Users

- Comply with laws
- Be efficient
- Dispose responsibly
- Assess rights impact in choosing suppliers and site
- Work with governments and stakeholders
Water providers

- Abide by law
- Include the marginalized
- Ensure affordability (USO)
- Monitor prices, prevent arbitrary disconnections
Rights-based approach

- Non-Discrimination
- Full range of rights - interdependence, inter-relatedness
- Empower right to know (be transparent and accountable)
- Establish accountability mechanisms
Where to find us

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